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Message Text

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44
ACTION PC-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 IGA-02 /012 W
---------- 088168
P R 211000Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6013
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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FOR PEACE CORPS AFRICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR FROM AMBASSADOR;

ALSO FOR AF ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFELE; DAKAR FOR
PC-SCHAFER

E.O. 11652: N/A (DECONTROL 31 JULY 1978)
TAGS: EAID, PEACE CORPS, MR
SUBJ: FUTURE OF PEACE CORPS IN MAURITANIA

REF: (A) STATE 170441, (B) STATE 161183, (C) DAKAR 4258,
(D) NOUAKCHOTT 1152

1. IN THE REAL WORLD OF MAURITANIA, ACTION PRGRAMS HAVE NO "HOLD"BUTTONS. THEY COME EQUIPPED ONLY WITH "START" AND "STOP" SWITCHES. IF A USG REPRESENTATIVE IS REQUIRED TO INFORM MINISTERS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND OF EDUCATION THAT PCVS WHICH USG PROMISED THEM AND THEY ARE COUNTING ON TO MAN THEIR CLASSROOMS AND PROJECTS THIS FALL ARE NOT COMING, RESULT WILL BE IN FACT TERMINATION OF PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN MAURITANIA FOR NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, WHATEVER LABLE MAY BE AFFIXED IN WASHINGTON. BY RENEGING ON COMMITMENT, THUS PUTING FINISHING FLOURISH ON EIGHTEEN-MONTH DOWNWARD SPIRAL, PEACE CORPS WILL HAVE CONCLUSIVELY DEMONSTRATED THAT IT IS NOT RPT NOT A SERIOUS AND RELIABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNER. THUS, IF PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR IS NOT IN PLACE BY MID-AUGUST AS PROMISED AND FULL COMPLEMENT OF REPLACEMENT VOLUNTEERS (MINUS ATAR AND TIDJIKDJA PUMP MECHANICS) DOES NOT ARRIVE REASONABLY CLOSE TO
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ORIGINALLY-PROMISED LATE SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE, USG MAY

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AS WELL FORGET ABOUT PEACE CORPS IN MAURITANIA FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE. ONLY WITH PASSAGE OF TIME OR TRANSFER OF PRESENT GENERATION OF GIRM PROGRAM MANAGERS (MINISTER/POLITICIANS AND IDEALISTIC YOUNG TECHNOCRATS ALIKE) TO OTHER JOBS, WILL IT BE POSSIBLE TO ATTEMPT TO REESTABTISH PEACE CORPS HERE, AND THEN MAJOR EXPENDITURE OF EFFORT OVER MANY MONTHS WILL BE REQUIRED.

2. IN TERMS OF BOTH IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM US INTERESTS IN MAURITANIA, I THINK TERMINATION OF PEACE CORPS ACTIVITIES HERE, BY WHATEVER LABEL, WOULD BE SERIOUS MISTAKE. AS I INDICATED IN MY MAY TELEGRAM TO JOHN TORIAN, "THERE IS LARGE AND VERY CONSTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL ROLE FOR PEACE CORPS TO PLAY IN MAURITANIA IF PROGRAM IS COMEPTENTLY, ENERGENTICALLY, AND IMAGINATIVELY LED AND MANAGED". I AM EVEN MORE CONVINCED NOW THAN I WAS IN EARLY MAY THAT THERE IS A REAL JOB OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE FOR PEACE CORPS TO DO IN THIS VERY POOR BUT DETERMINED-TO-DEVELOP COUNTRY. PC CAN MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF MAURITANIA. IT CAN AT SAME TIME ACHIEVE THE EQUALLY IMPORTANT AND LONG-STANDING PC OBJECTIVES OF PROVIDING ENTHUSIASTIC AEXJICANS, YOUNG AND OLD, AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW AND DEVELOP THROUGH NEW EXPERIENCE AND CROSS-CULTURAL CONTACT, AND OF PROVIDING FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF VOLUNTEERS IN US OPPORTUNITY TO BROADEN THEIR HORIZONS THROUGH THE EYES AND EARS OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

3. AS EXAMPLE, PC IS ALREADY INVOLVED IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT SECONDARY SCHOLL LEVEL. WITH ANNOUNCED INTENTION OF FRENCH TO TERMINATE THEIR ENGLISH TEACHING CO-ORANT PROGRAM AT END 1977-78 ACADEMIC YEAR, PC TEFL PROGRAM COULD EXPAND INTO EVERY LYCEE IN COUNTRY (EIGHT OR NINE BY THEN IF PRESENTPLANS ARE IMPLEMENTED) WITH TWO VOLUNTEERS INHQO OR THREE OF THE LARGER SCHOOLS. ENGLISH-TEACHING PROGRAMS AT BOTH TEACHER TRAINING COLEGE (ENS) AND NATIONAL SCHOOT OF ADMINISTRATION (ENA) DESPERATELY NEED NATIVE-SPEAKER INSTRUCTORS AND EXPE-

RIENCED LANGUAGE LABORATORY TECHNICIANS TO DESIGN, SET UP, AND RUN INSTTRUCTION PROGRAM UTILIZING TWO LARGE, SOPHISTICATED LANGUAGE LABS PROVIDED BY UN WHICH ARE PRESENTLY USED LESS THAN DOZEN HOURS PER WEEK, BRITISH COUNCIL, WHICH HAS ONE PROFESSOR HERE, WOULD WELCOME US COOPERATION IN SINGLE , STRONG, ENGLISH-TEACHING PROGRAM AIMED AT BOTH ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL (CIVIL AVIATION, HOTEL, CUSTOMS PERSONNEL) STTDENTS. WITH

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MANPOWER SUPPORT OF PEACE CORPS, LANGUAGE LABS IN ENS
AND ENA COULD BECOME FOCUS OF AFTER-HOURS ENGLISH
PROGRAM OF STANDARD AND INTENSIVE REFRESHER COURSES
FOR MINISTERS AND SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS, SIGNIFICANT
NUMBER OF WHOM ARE ANXIOUS TO CONVER THEIR TEXTBOOK
KNOWLEDGE INTO REAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOL. IN SUM, PC
COULD IN THREE OR FOUR YEARS BECOME PRIME MOVEER IN
OPENING UP US MANAGERIAL AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO
MAURITANIANS, AND IN PROVIDING US DIRECT ACCESS TO
PRESENT A R FUTURE MANAGERS OF MAURITANIA. EXPANDING
AID PROGRAMS IN AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND RURAL DEVLELOPMENT
ALSO NEED PC AS WELL AS MORE PROFESSIONALLY EXPE-
REIENCED VOLUNTEERS OF IVS AND OTHER GROUPS. PRIME
LIMITING FACTOR CONSTRAINING MAURITANIAN DEVELOPMENT
IS LACK OF TRAINED MANPOWER. PEACE CORPS CAN HELP IN
VERY SUBSTANTIAL WAY TO OVERCOME THIS CRITICAL LIC -
TATION.

4. "RNENT EVENTS" CITED IN YOUR HOLD TELEGRAM (REF A)
PRESUMABLY REFER TO DRAMATIC EARLY JUNE RAID ONNOUAK-
CHOTT AND OTHER POLISARIO HIT-AND-RUN ATTACKS IN NORTH
AND FAR NORTH OF MAURITANIA; ANDMORE BROADLY TO GENERAL
SECURITY SITUATIONAND TO OUR INABILITY TO PREDICT WITH
ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY NZAR-TERM AND LONGER-TERM SECURITY
ENVIROMENT IN MAURITANIA. UNTIL ALGERIAN-MOROCCAN/
MAURITANIAN SAHARA CONFRONTATION IS RESOLVED OR UNTIL
ALGERIA DECIDES TO DROP SAHARA ISSUE IN FAVOR OF SOME
OT IR CHALLENGE TO HASSANJM .949::9, RISKS INVOLVED
IN NORTH AND FAR NORTH ARE CURRENTLY TOO GREAT TO
PERMIT ASSIGNMENT OF PCVS TO LOCATIONS NORTH OF
AKJOUJT. (THE NEARLY 400 FRENCH TECHNICIANS AND
THEIR FAMILIES IN ZOUERATE ARE ALL IN ONE PLACE, ARE
INVOLVED IN VITAL IRON ORE INDUSTRY, AND ARE GUARANTEED
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EVACUATION AT MOMENTS NOTICE BY FRENCH AIR FORCE).
TECHNICAL LEVEL OF GIRM, MOREOVER, RECOGNIZES SECURITY
PROBLEM: DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE RECENTLY TOLD DCM
THAT HIS MINITRY WOULD NOT ASK US TO SEND PCVS BACK
TO ATAR OR TIDJIKDJA (DESPITE SERIOUS, ADVERSE IMPACT
THEIR DEPARTURES HAD ON GOVERNMENT'S AGRICULTURAL EF-
FORT) UNTIL GIRM COULD INSURE THEIR SECURITY. BUT
NOUAKCHOTT AND SITES TO SOUTH FALL INTO ENTIRELY DIF
FERENT CATEGORY. KAEDI, WHERE FOUR OF REMAINING SIX
SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEERS ARE SLATED TO LIVE AND WORK, IS ON
MAURITANIAN/SENEGALESE BORDER, 850 MILES FROM TINDOUF
AND LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED MILES NORTH OF DAKAR. REA-
LISTICALLY, GIRM CANNOT PREVENT ISOLATED,POINT-SCORING
ATTACK ON ITS CAPITAL CITY. US ,BRITISH, AND SPANISH
AUTHORITIES, TO NAME JUST A FEW IN THIS CRAZY MODERN

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WORLD, HAVE RECENTLY ATTESTED ONCE AGAIN TO FACT THAT
THEY CANNOT PREVENT POLITICAL BOMBINGS OR SHOOTINGS

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44
ACTION PC-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 IGA-02 /012 W
---------- 087471
P R 211000Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PIORITY 6014
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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IN WASHINGTON, NEW YORK,LONDON, AND MADRID EITHER. NO GOVERNMENT CAN GUARANTEE SECURITY--WHETHER FOR PCVS IN NOUAKCHOTT, FOR SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN NEW YORK OR FOR ORDINARY CITIZENS ON THE SIDEWALKS OF GEORGETOWN. BUT OBJECTIVELY, STATISTICAL PROBABILITIES FOR SECURITY PROBLEMS IN ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL PCV SITES IN SOUTH OF MAURITANIA ARE MINIMAL. EVEN FOR NOUAKCHOTT THEY ARE LOW, SINCE PCVS WILL NOT BE LIVING OR WORKING NEXT DOOR TO PRESIDENCY , TOMILITARY HEADQUARTERS, OR TO POL TANK FARM.

5. GIVEN (A) PREDICTABLE REACTION WITHIN GIRM TO US FAILURE TO FULFILL COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY ESSENTIAL PCV MANPOWER (B) ANTICIPATED INABILITY TO REINTEREST GIRM MANAGERS IN PEACE CORPS AND TO REACTIVATE PROGRAM SO LONG AS MEMORIES OF PC'S UNRELIABILITY AS DEVELOPMENT PARTNER REMAIN SHARP AND CLEAR, (C) LARGE AND SIGNIFICANT JOB PC CAN DO IN MAURITANIA; (D) SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION PC CAN MAKE TO ACHIEVEMENT OF OTHER US DIPLOMATIC AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES HERE, (E) FACT THAT KAEDI PROGRAM WAS SHOWPIECE OF PC EFFORT, THAT PLACES FOR VOLUNTEERS ARE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN HOST INSTITUTIONS, AND THATPHYSICAL FACILITIES AND SUPPORT STRUCTURE EXIST, THUS REDUCING TOMINIMUM INSTALLATION TASK

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OF NEW DIRECTOR, AND (F) FACT THAT NO PLACE IN THIS
WORLD IS ABSOLUTELY SECURE, I WOULD VERY MUCH HOPE THAT
PC/WASHINGTON WILL ON URGENT BASIS: (1) REVIEW AND
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REVERSE ITS HOLD DEVGSION; (2) MAKE COMMAND DECISION
AT HIGHEST LEVELS OF PEACE CORPS TO COMMIT WHATEVER
RESOURCES OF STAFF, MONEY AND EFFORT ARE REQUIRED TO
MOUNT AND SUSTAIN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM IN MAURITANIA;
AND (3) PROMPTLY TAKE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS NEEDED
TO GET NEW DIRECTOR IN PLACE BY MID-AUGUST AND SIX
REPLACEMENT VOLUNTEERS ON SITE BY OCTOBER FIRST.

6. BUT, IF PC/W, AT DIRECTOR AND REGIONAL DEIRECTOR
LEVEL, IS NOT INTERESTED IN MOUNTING EFFECTIVE PROGRAM
IN MAURITANIA OR IS NOT PREPARED TO MAKE FIRM COMMITMENT
OF RESOURCES REQUIRED, NOW IS TIME TO TERMINATE PROGRAM
AND WITHDRAW PC PRESENCE ENTIRELY. REMAINING TEFL VO-
LUNTEER DEPARTED PERMANENTLY THIS WEEK; TWO PUMP MECHA-
NICS WILL PROBABLY BE DEPARTING MID-AUGUST ON REASSIGN-
MENT; IRRIGATION SPECIALIST IS PLANNING DEPART FIRST WEEK
SEPTEMBER. SOLE SURVIVING VOLUNTEER (UNICEF DIRECTOR)
IS SCHEDULED TO BE HOME FOR THANKSGIVING.

7. TIME FOR TEMPORIZING IS PAST. PEACE CORPS PROGRAM
IN MAURITANIA, WHICH FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTORS TERMED A "DI-
SASTER" IN MARCH, HAS SINCE BECOME AN EMBARRASSEMENT TO
US MISSION AND TO USG AS WHOLE. FAILURE TO HONOR COM-
MITMENT TO GIRM TOSUPPLY ESSENTIAL MANPOWER WILL IN-
CREASE EMBARRASSMENT TO ACUTE LEVEL. IN MY VIEW, PEACE
CORPS MUST NOW ON URGENT BASIS FISH OR CUT BAIT.

HANDYSIDE

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Film Number: D760280-0673
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760737/aaaabgaf.tel
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